

spending increase from \$4,500 this year to \$6,800 7 years from now is a spending cut. Again, more spin control.

Then we get somebody coming in from my home State, Florida, saying I want to protect the senior citizens in Florida. Yet the gentleman knows it goes bankrupt 7 years from now, and every senior citizen from Florida to California is without Medicare if we follow the Democrats' path.

As a Democrat says, beam me up, Scotty, I cannot take any more. I have to hold onto this podium tight because the spin control is going crazy. Let us talk reality for a second and talk real numbers. We are willing to save Medicare, and I hope we get some help from the Democrats.

□ 1020

REPUBLICANS NOW ENGAGED IN DAMAGE CONTROL REGARDING CUTS TO MEDICARE

(Mr. LEVIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, it is really damage control that they are engaged in. Those who are trying to cut Medicare massively are now trying to cover their tracks with deception. The majority party is now working with a group calling itself the Senior Coalition and it is passing around what they call "the Pledge to save Medicare."

Testimony from this group a few weeks ago before the Committee on Ways and Means came out in support of \$270 billion in the Republican cuts, though they did not know what was in the cuts. This pledge says: "Let's increase Medicare spending for beneficiaries, even though the \$270 billion cut would increase copayments and deductible for seniors." This so-called pledge talks about maintaining the current Medicare fee-for-service system, even though the \$270 billion in cuts would squeeze the option of fee-for-service for seniors. The majority party is on the run. There is no place to hide; surely not behind a cloud of deception.

NASA'S REMOTE SENSING TECHNOLOGY

(Mr. SALMON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SALMON. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, 23,000 acres in the Scottsdale, AZ area were ravaged by terrible brush fires. The damage could have been much worse if not for a partnership between NASA and the city of Scottsdale.

Testing the applications of a new technology, called remote sensing, NASA jets flying over the blaze beamed images of the fire's hot spots via satellite to the ground. Firefighters were then able to use their limited resources

more effectively and contain the blaze days sooner than they had thought possible, thus saving property, money, and lives.

Mr. Speaker, we will vote today to continue the excellent scientific research that is being conducted at NASA, and to streamline the agency by moving mature technologies toward privatization. The way Scottsdale and NASA worked together is a wonderful example of space technology being used to improve the lives of those of us here on Earth.

A SORRY BIRTHDAY GREETING FOR MEDICARE ON ITS 30TH BIRTHDAY

(Mr. DOGGETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DOGGETT. It is the 30th birthday of Medicare, Mr. Speaker. What we have heard again this morning are birthday greetings for Medicare recipients from our Republican colleagues. It all boils down to a single sentence: They are saying to the older Americans of this country, "If you will pay more for your health care, we will give you less health care." That is a pretty sorry birthday greeting, so they had to hire a public relations firm, and I have their report here, to tell them, "Don't talk about improving Medicare. We can't afford to raise expectations, but keep in mind that seniors are very PAC-oriented and very susceptible to being led." That is what the Republican public relations firm told them to tell older Americans.

Then they came up with a Medicare pledge from a so-called Seniors Coalition. What that pledge says is, when you read between the lines, "Raise the deductible, raise the premiums, pay more, and get less, Mr. and Mrs. Older American." That is a sorry birthday greeting for Medicare. When Lyndon Johnson signed Medicare into law, he signed a candle of hope, and we cannot have that candle extinguished by this Republican initiative.

THE FIRES OF MEDICARE ARE BURNING

(Mr. HAYWORTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I cannot help but notice that my friend, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. DOGGETT], continually wants to go with budget overruns and time overruns. The fact is this: The best way to preserve Medicare is to stand now to save it, not play the old whining game of the liberals saying, "We need to spend more and more," but find a way to say "Yes, spend more money, but spend it more effectively."

My colleague, the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. SALMON], made mention of the fire in my district and the fact

that firefighters had to stand and deliver.

We have a crisis that is just as imminent as that fire. The fires of Medicare are burning. If we really want to save it, then my friends on this side, the liberals, come with us, let us work to solve the problem, and quit playing the sordid politics of the past.

REPUBLICAN PARTY DOTH PROTEST TOO MUCH CONCERNING MEDICARE

(Mr. DEUTSCH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I would say to my Republican colleagues, "Thou doth protest too much." Let me talk about specifics. I hope that the people of this country are watching and getting engaged in this debate, because the reality of the 30-year history of the Medicare system is it never had more than a 10-year actual life. In fact, at one point in time, it had a 2-year actuarial life.

The majority party has made adjustments, or the former majority party has made adjustments. In my first year in Congress in 1993, we had a \$50 billion adjustment to the Medicare system. What my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are proposing is a \$270 billion cut in Medicare, astronomical by any comparison to what had ever been done before. It was not dictated by actuarial analysis. It was dictated by their budget, and they drew that. There is no doubt they can save \$270 billion in Medicare, but the Medicare that will exist in America under the Republican plan will adversely affect 37 million people in this country. It will not be the Medicare that we know today.

WORKING TOGETHER TO SAVE MEDICARE

(Mr. KNOLLENBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. As we have heard, Mr. Speaker, the Medicare anniversary is July 30. Thirty years it has been in existence. This vital program, while it is only 30 years old, faces a very strong financial crisis. I think everybody on both sides of the aisle knows that. The Medicare board of trustees have concluded that Medicare part A, the hospital insurance trust fund, will be bankrupt in 7 years. We cannot say it any more simply. We will be unable to pay those bills for seniors.

The Republican majority will not let this happen and I am sure many of the Democrats do not want that to happen. We understand the importance of Medicare to seniors and stand ready to protect, preserve, and to strengthen this

program for current and future retirees. Unfortunately, many of our political opponents are trying to turn Medicare, the Medicare crisis, into a political issue. They continue to distort the idea of protecting Medicare by scaring seniors with imagined Medicare cuts, even though, as everybody knows, the benefits go per beneficiary from \$4,800 to \$6,700.

I would just ask the Democratic leadership and the Democrats on the other side, please help us. Join up with us, roll up your sleeves, let us achieve both better care with more choices. Let us protect and strengthen Medicare.

DO NOT REPEAL MEDICARE, THE ORIGINAL CONTRACT WITH SENIORS

(Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, elected officials should listen more and talk less. I listened today while my Republican colleagues talked about how they intend to save Medicare. What they did not say is how they reduce expected needs of Medicare \$270 billion over 7 years and still cut taxes \$245 billion. Cut taxes, cut Medicare. Does that balance out?

Medicare. There is an estimated \$44 billion in fraud and abuse in the Medicare system. Maybe we do have some agreement on both sides, and we can cut fraud and abuse and still provide for senior health care. However, it also appears that the new Republican majority is cutting personnel in the Health Care Financing Administration, the GAO, who investigate the fraud in Medicare. Furthermore, the account in the Labor-HHS appropriation bill is \$2 million below last year for finding fraud, waste, and abuse. We need to save Medicare by cutting the fraud, but only in Washington can a \$270 billion cut be said it is to save the program. We do not need to repeal the original contract with American seniors in 1965. Happy birthday—Medicare.

PRESIDENT CLINTON MUST REALIZE THERE IS NO PEACE IN BOSNIA TO KEEP

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, how many times will we have to watch President Clinton flip-flop on his Bosnian policy before we lift the arms embargo?

How much more indecision and bad judgment calls, not to mention flubbed airstrikes by the United Nations will we have to endure?

How many lives are we going to have to lose before common sense wins out?

The President is upholding an embargo on a country that no longer exists that will further involve the United

States and possibly our troops in a war that is not ours to fight. We do not need U.N. control, we need U.S. control.

We keep hearing that we cannot lift the embargo because President Clinton wants to do whatever he can to keep the peace. Mr. Speaker, when is he going to realize that there is no peace to keep?

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO MEDICARE

(Ms. ESHOO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate Medicare's 30th birthday, let us remember its genesis.

It was the people of this country who asked their government to enter into a partnership with them to provide security in their later years.

It was an idea supported by Presidents Truman, Kennedy, Johnson, and even Nixon.

It was an idea that worked and continues to work.

Not one of my constituents has ever written, called, or met with me asking me to gut Medicare, eliminate it, or slash its funding.

The Republicans seem to think that they can fool the citizens of this country into thinking that their massive cuts will somehow reform the system. Cuts, I might add, that are suspiciously similar to the amount of money needed for their tax break package.

Mr. Speaker, Medicare is a trust fund, not a slush fund. It is a program whose inception began with the American people and is still overwhelmingly supported by them.

Let us celebrate Medicare's 30th birthday, Mr. Speaker, not prepare for its funeral.

REPUBLICANS' PROPOSAL CONTAINS MORE, NOT LESS, SPENDING FOR MEDICARE

(Mr. NORWOOD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, this truly is an amazing 20 minutes, and surely must be very confusing to those people who are listening. Perhaps if we simplify this a little and do a little of the things that we might have done in the fourth grade, and use some repetition.

The average spending per Medicare beneficiary today is \$4,800. Under the Republican plan, Medicare spending per beneficiary in the year 2002 will be \$6,700. Under this plan, Medicare spending increases by \$1,900 per beneficiary. That is a 40-percent increase. Let us try again, Mr. Speaker.

The average spending per Medicare beneficiary today is \$4,800. Under the Republican plan, Medicare spending per beneficiary in the year 2002 will be \$6,700. Under this plan Medicare spending will increase by \$1,900.

Mr. Speaker, that is a 40-percent increase.

THE WACO TRAGEDY: THE TRUTH VERSUS DAVID KORESH'S DREAM TEAM

(Mr. WILLIAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, I have been very concerned that the actions of the ATF and the FBI were inappropriate, to say the least, in that tragedy that occurred for everyone in Waco. Therefore, as one who is concerned about the ATF and the FBI action, I observed with great interest the congressional hearings that were held in the last Congress, and I have been an equally observant watcher of the congressional hearings about Waco in this Congress. I must say, the hearings this time have been politicized, and in my judgment, worse, are really an embarrassment to this House, and to the American people who seek to find out the truth.

The Republican majority on the committee are tragically acting like the defense for the Branch Davidians. They are appearing to be David Koresh's dream team. That is embarrassing. We need to get at the truth.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2099, DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996

Mr. QUILLEN. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 201 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 201

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 1(b) of rule XXIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2099) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule, and the amendment printed in part 1 of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered as pending. That amendment shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for thirty minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. If that amendment is adopted,